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Final Report

The Impact of PIVOTAL Programmes Toward the Implementation of Transformational Imperatives 2017/18, i.e., Disabled, Youth and Women: (Gauteng, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, and Limpopo Participation)

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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the “Impact Assessment of PIVOTAL Programmes Towards the Implementation of Transformational Imperatives in 2017/18 in the Wholesale and Retail”. The study assessed the successes and areas of improvement of PIVOTAL programmes carried out in 2017/18¹, with particular emphasis on the impact of interventions on previously disadvantaged groups such as women, youth, and people with disabilities.

In addition to reviewing literature on the W&RSETA, W&R sector and transformation, this report seeks to paint a picture of how PIVOTAL programmes performed in terms of the training conducted, transformation achieved, and impact attained.

Whilst transformation is targeted in training, this does not always show in employment

The study included an extensive document and literature review which tracked the continued emphasis on support for women, youth, and people with disabilities. It was revealed that whilst transformation in terms of including more women, youth, and people with disabilities has been a government and sector priority for some time and much has been written about the topic, there is still room for improvement in terms of including previously disadvantaged groups in the workplace (i.e., training resulting in more and better work opportunities).

PIVOTAL programmes were partially effective in training, with NQF L2-L5 learnerships performing best

Two objectives were assessed: registering and certificating unemployed learners in PIVOTAL programmes and registering and certificating employed learners in PIVOTAL programmes, both of which were overall partially met. This is due to a mixed bag of achievement in activities. Regarding unemployed learners, eight activities were assessed, with most (6) being either partially met (50-99% of the targets achieved) or not met (less than 50% of targets achieved). The only two activities that were met, at the least, are registering unemployed learners on NQF L2-L5 learnerships and registering unemployed learners on learnerships and apprenticeships addressing scarce skills artisans’ occupations, the latter having been achieved exemplarily. There were 10 activities assessed for employed learners, the majority of which (8) were either partially met or not met. Two activities were met (registering employed learners on NQF L2 - L5 learnerships and certificating employed learners via Recognition of Prior Learning).

In general, registration of unemployed learners fared better than certification as no targets were met regarding unemployed learners being certified, suggesting that not enough learners completed their programmes. However, registration of employed learners generally fared largely the same as certification. NQF L2 - L5 qualifications addressing W&R scarce skills occupations performed best. Unemployed learners that registered in NQF 2-5 learnerships showed better results in comparison to those who registered for NQF 1 AET learnerships. Whilst NQF L1 AET learnerships for the employed achieved at least 50% of their registration target, the target for certificating was not met. This means that, similar to unemployed learners, employed learners on AET programmes struggle to complete their courses. This suggests that work experience is not a differentiating factor in encouraging adults with limited education to complete their programmes and further their education.

Overall, with regard to registering and certificating unemployed and employed learners in PIVOTAL programmes, W&RSETA achieved 81% (unemployed learners) and 65% (employed learners) of its targets, with an average achievement of 61.46% for unemployed learners and 57% for employed

¹ The findings of the study are depicted in the form of heat maps, where the colours indicate the extent to which results were realised. The ratings are either exemplary, met, partially met or not met. See section 2.3 for more details on the ratings and scales used.

learners. This means PIVOTAL programmes are partially effective in training learners, with room for improvement.

Transformation is hampered by poor completion rates

The highest completion rate across learnerships and skills development was seen in people with disabilities, with 54.1% of them completing their learnerships in 2017/18. Corresponding with the findings of the PIVOTAL programmes' assessment above, whilst previously disadvantaged individuals are included in programmes, many do not complete these programmes and this may limit their ability to access further training opportunities and employment. After people with disabilities, women had the most success in learnerships (39.5% completion rate), followed by youth (32.7% completion rate). Skills development showed even poorer completion rates than learnerships, with the highest achievement being the 34.3% completion rate achieved by women.

Overall, transformation imperatives were not effective as the targeted groups do not complete their training at all or do not complete on time.

The overall impact of increasing employment was partially achieved, spurred on by exemplary coaching and mentoring and workplace exposure, but limited by training, stipends and training support

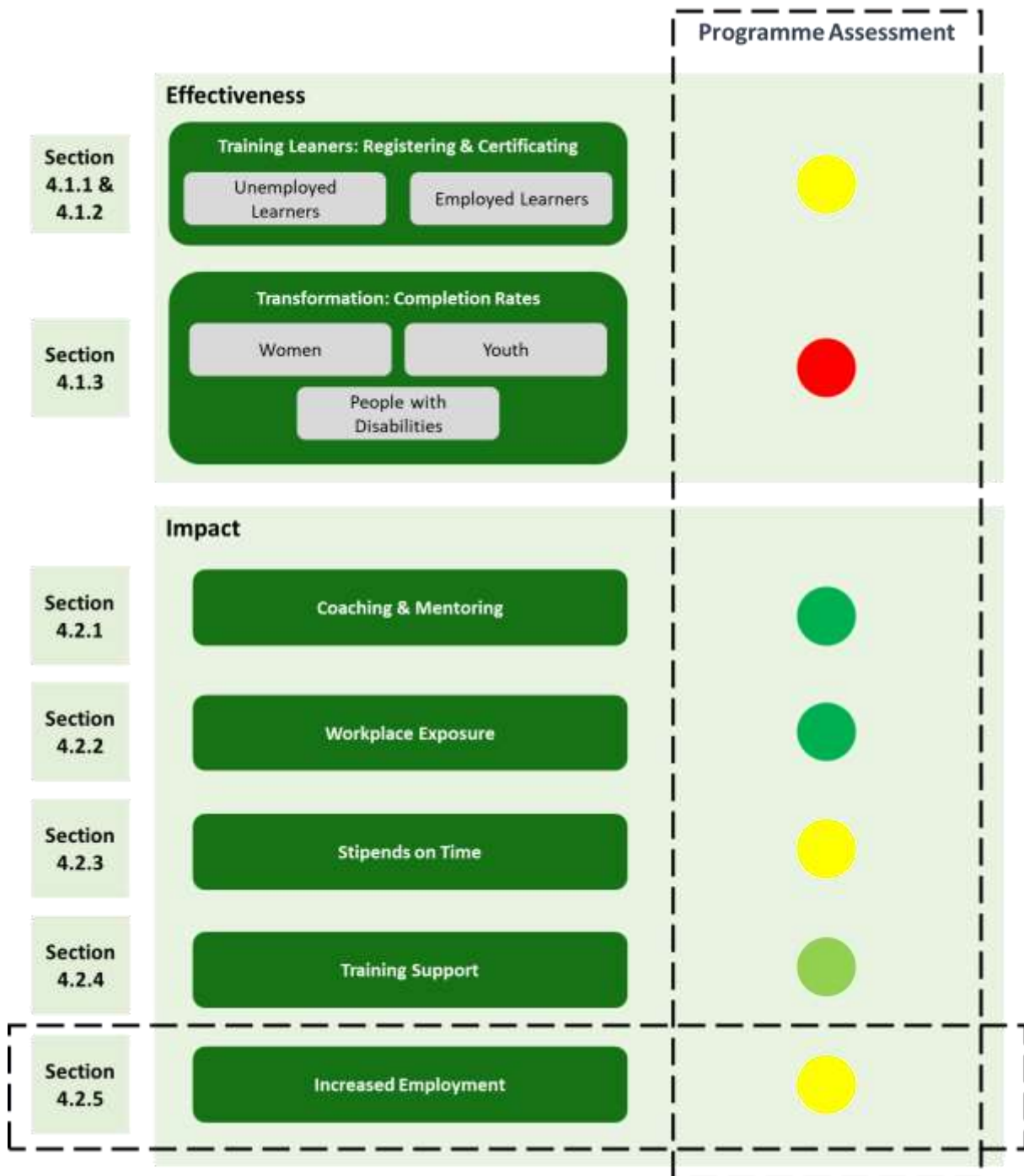
The broader impact that has occurred as a result of the implementation of PIVOTAL Programmes towards the implementation of transformational imperatives was evaluated based on an assessment of delivery of five impacts, with the fifth impact (increasing employment) being the overarching goal. These results follow on from the activities of the training conducted (assessed above as effectiveness).

As previously explained, PIVOTAL programmes were only partially effective in training learners as many of the targets were not achieved. This means the contribution of PIVOTAL programmes to employment is limited as they do not produce enough skilled candidates.

The impact assessment revealed that women, youth and people with disabilities have largely received coaching and mentoring (exemplary), workplace exposure (exemplary, with learners gaining practical skills in the workplace and using these to progress to positions such as trainee manager - a top 10 Hard-to-fill-Vacancy), stipends on time (partially met, with 32% of women not receiving a stipend at all) and training support (met), which is laudable as these are key to learner success during and after participation in PIVOTAL programmes. However, it is noted that whilst these impacts were all at least partially met, they did not translate into a significant increase in employment. Overall, 58% of learners believe that the training received helped them get a job. Despite having received the most support, only 40% of people with disabilities believe that the training and support they received helped them get jobs.

These overall findings are articulated in the dashboard on the following page.

Figure 0-1: Overall Performance Dashboard



Key Findings and Recommendations

The table below presents a summary of the key findings and recommendations that have presented themselves during this Study.

Table 0-1: Key Findings and Recommendations

Focus Area	Key Finding	Recommendation	
1	Improving poor target achievement across programmes by better facilitating and managing learning programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both objectives of registering and certifying unemployed and employed learners were partially met, limited by a poor showing in certifications, particularly in L1 qualifications and artisan qualifications NQF L2-L5 programmes were more effective and show better performance than NQF L1 AET Learnerships Completion across programmes is poor. However, NQF L2 - L5 qualifications addressing W&R scarce skills occupations and NQF 2-5 learnerships for unemployed learners showed better results. The similar performance of programmes across unemployed and employed learners suggests that work experience is not a differentiating factor in effective training activities, completing training or securing/improving employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many targets were not achieved due to delays in the process. The SETA should embark on an exercise to map out and improve its business processes and architecture, with a view to automate, remove duplications and fill gaps to improve efficiency More awareness and support needs to be provided to those on NQF L1 qualifications, particularly adults in AET. The dissemination of information on what can be achieved with lower-level qualifications may encourage learners to acquire more experience or higher-level qualifications to further their progress in the sector The supply of learners across different NQF qualifications levels (e.g., L1 and L2 vs. L3+) and programmes (e.g., learnerships vs. skills programmes) should be assessed based not only on demand but future projections with change drivers in mind. More intense, higher level qualifications may prove more advantageous for learners in an ultra-competitive and changing labour market The SETA should bolster partnerships with employers, training providers and other stakeholders to increase their capacity to train and absorb learners
2	Promoting transformation and employment by improving completion rates of previously disadvantaged groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to completion rates being low across programmes, they are also low across various previously disadvantaged groups At 54.1%, the highest completion rates are those for people with disabilities on learnerships The average completion rate for people with disabilities, women and youth in 2017/18 in learnerships and skills development was 36% This means that whilst previously disadvantaged individuals are afforded opportunities to enter training, they do not enter the labour market in as many numbers, decreasing the potential for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase (on-time) completion rates of people with disabilities, youth and women through effective and relevant training and necessary support such as coaching and mentoring, workplace exposure, paying stipends (and paying them on time), and providing other types of support such as study leave and psychosocial support To ensure learning programmes offer learners the best chance at completion and employment, the following are suggested as appropriate target cohorts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learnerships should predominantly be targeted towards unemployed learners. Internships should predominantly be targeted towards unemployed university graduates.

Focus Area	Key Finding	Recommendation
	<p>transformation in the workplace and limiting an increase in employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apprenticeships should be maintained as a focus on trades ○ Skills programmes should predominantly be targeted towards employed learners. By its nature a skills programme is short in duration and limited on content, therefore it is more appropriate for people who already have some knowledge and skills and do not need a lengthier, more in-depth programme. This may also assist in redirecting unskilled learners away from programmes viewed as limited for the extent of training they require ○ Short programmes, particularly targeted at employed learners, may be useful in providing refresher courses and topping up skills in a prompt, responsive manner. However, as a short programme is not exhaustive (it may, in fact, be specialist), they need to be paired with some skills base gained either through prior work experience or introduced in programmes such as learnerships, internships, apprenticeships and skills programmes
<p>3 Creating employment as an impact through sufficient skilling and support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People with disabilities received the most support in terms of coaching and mentoring, workplace exposure and receiving stipends on time. They also followed on closely from the youth in terms of receiving other types of support such as study leave. ● Despite this support, people with disabilities fared the worst in securing employment. Only 40% of people with disabilities believe that the training and support they received helped them get jobs. ● Overall, only 58% of all previously disadvantaged learners believe that the training received helped them get a job ● The mismatch between training and employment outcomes suggests that the sector is not able to absorb enough learners. This may be because learners are qualified in oversaturated fields, employers do not have confidence in the training they received or economic conditions (such as the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support people with disabilities to enter employment by incentivising employers to support them. In addition, employers should be trained on how best to accommodate people with disabilities in the workplace ● In conjunction with QCTO, accelerate the consultative processes for updating or developing courses to keep up to date with industry demand and change drivers such as 4IR and COVID-19, thus making learners more competitive sooner ● Introduce and/or emphasise unit standards on soft skills and business management skills for all courses. This is expected to improve learners' employability and entrepreneurship skills. ● On the premise of providing business management training and learners utilising the entrepreneurship skills gained, encourage entrepreneurship as an alternative to employment ● Partner with (larger) employers, incubators and other stakeholders to incubate and mentor emerging small businesses

Focus Area	Key Finding	Recommendation
	which greatly affected the W&R sector) do not allow for mass absorption of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whilst programmes are relooked at to include more emphasis on soft skills and business management skills, short programmes can fill this void.

1 Introduction

This document includes the findings from document review, data analysis and stakeholder consultations for the Impact Assessment of PIVOTAL Programmes Towards the Implementation of Transformational Imperatives in 2017/18 in the Wholesale and Retail (the “Project” or “study”) for W&RSETA.

The following table provides an outline of the sections contained in this document.

Table 1-1: Document Outline

Section	Contents	Description
1	Introduction	This section introduces the project and provides overviews of W&RSETA and Redflank
2	Research Methodology	Research methodology to describe the research processes undertaken in order to conduct the Research
3	Document and Literature Review	Desktop-based research, including review of policy positions and imperatives over the years
4	Research Findings	Findings from research conducted, including impact and effectiveness assessments
5	Key Findings and Recommendations	Recommendations based on the assessment conducted
6	References	A list of references consulted in the production of this report

1.1 W&RSETA Overview

The Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (“W&RSETA”) was established in 2000 in terms of the Skills Development Act. The public entity aims to facilitate the skills development needs of the Wholesale and Retail (“W&R”) sector through the implementation of learning programmes, disbursement of grants and monitoring of education and training as outlined in the National Skills Development Strategy (“NSDS”).

1.2 Redflank Overview

Redflank is a specialist management consultancy, assisting clients with the delivery of research, evaluations, strategy, diagnostic, implementation, and assurance projects. The specialist nature of our consultancy relates to the inclusion of deep management consulting and sector expertise in our project teams. Our client base includes public sector organisations (e.g., merSETA, National Treasury, DPSA) and private sector companies (e.g., Absa, Old Mutual, BMW). We have offices in Sandown, Gauteng, and Umhlanga. Redflank has a Level 1 B-BBEE rating and a 135% recognition level and is an accredited member of the South African Supplier Diversity Council.

1.3 Project Background

The W&RSETA has appointed Redflank to conduct an impact study of the PIVOTAL Programmes towards implementation of the SETA’s transformational objectives in the years 2017/18. This research will assist the W&RSETA to measure their progress in meeting the transformational objectives and to improve the programmes, overall.

2 Research Methodology

The research for this project comprised desk-based research and field research, covering both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The desk-based research involved the collation and review of relevant documentation as well as consulting publicly available data sources for additional information.

Field research included distributing electronic surveys. Stakeholders were learners of different previously disadvantaged backgrounds.

2.1 Desk-Based Research Undertaken

The desk-based research undertaken included a number of resources, including the following:

- SMS Reports (enrolments and completions)
- Annual Performance Plans
- Annual Reports
- Strategic Plans
- Business Cases
- Disability Policies
- NSDS III
- NSDP
- Grant Policies
- Project Charters
- Grant Standard Operating Procedures
- Sector Skills Plans

In addition to the above-mentioned sources, the desk-based research included a body of literature and research from inside and outside of South Africa. Section 6 provides a detailed reference list of the literature consulted in the production of this report.

2.2 Field Research Undertaken

This impact study utilised desk-based data as its primary source, supplemented by surveys with learners.

For the purpose of gaining additional perspective from stakeholders for the results chain analysis, learners were surveyed. The following tables illustrates the survey questions were used for the respective stakeholders.

Table 2-1: Learner Survey Questions

Question		Response Options
1	Did you receive coaching and mentoring while you completed your learning programme?	A. Yes B. No
2	Did you receive workplace exposure while you completed your learning programme?	A. Yes B. No

Question	Response Options
3 Did you receive a stipend on time?	A. Yes B. No C. I did not receive a stipend
4 Did you receive any support from your employer (besides mentoring and coaching) such as study leave?	A. Yes B. No
5 Did the training that you received help you get a job?	A. Yes B. No
6 If you answered yes to Q5, please provide details about the job position and company you worked for upon completion of the learning programme?	Open-ended

The responses to the above questions can be seen in section 4.2 (impact).

The study had a focus on assessing achievement of transformation imperatives. Accordingly, data collection focused on consulting with previously disadvantaged groups that had been assisted as part of the transformation targets set by the SETA. 242 responses were received, comprising various underrepresented groups, as follows:

Table 2-2: Survey Respondents

Category	Respondents
1 Overall	242
2 People with Disabilities	6
3 Women	174
4 Youth	183

2.3 Rating Scale Assessments

The findings of the study are depicted in the form of heat maps, where the colours indicate the extent to which results were realised.

The rating scale below, as used in the effectiveness assessment, is used to assess actual achievement against targets, as well as completion rates. Areas highlighted in dark green were assessed as **exemplary** practices (overachievement of a target by at least 20% above the target), light green were assessed as **met**, areas highlighted in yellow were assessed as **partially met** and areas highlighted in red were assessed as **not met**.

Results Chain Rating Scale: Targets and Completion Rates			
Exemplary (120%+)	Met (100%-119%)	Partially Met (50%-99%)	Not Met (0%-49%)

Similarly, a heat-mapped scale is used to assess impact. However, because there were no targets to assess against, the scale considers achievement as the number of positive responses indicating an impact (e.g., “yes” responses to the question of whether a certain impact was achieved) over the total number of respondents, thus generating a percentage out of 100%.

Results Chain Rating Scale: % Positive Responses			
Exemplary (80%-100%)	Met (66%-79%)	Partially Met (33%-65%)	Not Met (0%-32%)

2.4 Research Challenges

During the data collection phase of the project, two major challenges that hampered the data collection process were encountered. Although these issues were overcome by adapting the research design, it is worth noting these to inform the research approach in future.

Table 2-3: Research Challenges

Research Challenge		Response to Challenge
1	<p>Inaccurate Stakeholder Information and Unavailability of Stakeholder Contact Details</p> <p>The databases containing learner contact details had invalid contact details, resulting in unsuccessful attempts to contact some of them. This may be attributed to contact details such as cell phone numbers being deactivated after some time, for instance if the number is not in use anymore.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given that the stakeholders' contact details were not 100% accurate, the project team sent out the survey to a larger sample to increase the chances of a successful response.
2	<p>Reduced Scope of Survey Due to Limited Length of USSD/SMS Surveys</p> <p>As cell phone based surveys (USSD and SMS) are short by nature, the survey had to be reduced to keep respondent's engaged with responding and thus increase the chances of completion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A dual approach of literature review and primary consultations, both of which involved thorough data analysis, was adopted. The results chain assessment was completed using available data sources, whilst additional key questions were answered in the survey. The key questions in the survey revealed insights that could not be sourced from literature. These can be understood as key to measuring the impact of the interventions implemented (see section 4.2)

3 Document and Literature Review

This section provides an overview of the documents for the literature review. It focuses on highlighting the relevance, content, and function of the documents in relation to W&RSETA's PIVOTAL Programmes.

3.1 W&RSETA Background and Context

The W&RSETA's overall performance is measured against their strategic outcome-oriented goals and strategic objectives. As such, programmes and projects implemented by the SETA have to respond to these strategic goals and objectives as they are linked to development goals set at a national level. The Annual Performance Reports for the financial years of 2017/18 to 2018/19 provide an outline of data relating to W&RSETA's performance, which can be used to draw comparisons between the SETA's annual target and actual outputs.

The Annual Performance Report shows the performance of the learning programmes in relation to the relevant strategic objective against the performance indicator and provides an assessment through a comparison of baseline achievements of 2017/18, annual target of 2017/18 and the actual performance results of the 2017/18 financial year. The report shows that out of the 37 areas assessed for learning, only 23 of the goals were achieved which is slightly over 62%. The goal that was furthest from being achieved was registering 10 000 employed learners on NQF 2 to NQF 5 skills programmes or part qualifications addressing skills gaps and shortages, as per the 2018/19 SSP for Wholesale and Retail (W&RSETA, 2019/20). The SETA only managed to register about 32% of employed learners. In contrast, the goal for the number unemployed learners registered on learnerships or occupational programme on NQF 2 to NQF 5 addressing skills gaps and shortages, as per the 2019/20 SSP for Wholesale and Retail was exceeded by 1367 learners (W&RSETA, 2019/20).

The Quarter 2 Performance Report provides an overview of W&RSETA's performance in the second quarter of the 2020/21 financial year, as well as the successes, challenges and lessons learnt through implementation. The outcomes to be achieved in quarter 2 were improved operational efficiency and the reduction of skills shortages in the W&R sector, with the latter being directly focused on workplace-based learning opportunities in the sector. The report indicates that of the 10 goals set for quarter 2 of the financial year, only 2 were not achieved, while 6 were fully achieved and 2 were partly achieved by 70,4% and 85,8%, respectively (W&RSETA, 2020).

The PIVOTAL Programmes Charter for the 2019/20 financial year describes scope, objectives and approach for the implementation carried out on PIVOTAL programmes, thus, making it a key component for the project's initiation, planning, execution, management and assessment (W&RSETA, 2019/20). The document details the goals and objectives of the PIVOTAL programmes, specifically outlining the targets set in place for the completion of and registration of employed and unemployed learners on NQF 2 to NQF 5 occupational skills programmes and qualifications, and their obtaining critical and scarce sector skills. The charter is helpful for providing an understanding of the goals of the project, the work that needed to be actioned to obtain the goals and the intended impact on involved stakeholders and beneficiaries.

In response to the Wholesale and Retail Sector's development, the W&RSETA proposed the initiation of the PIVOTAL programmes project. The PIVOTAL Programmes Project Proposal for 2018/19 provides a summary of the business problem being addressed through the project, as well as the set resolutions

and recommendations for implementing the project (W&RSETA, 2018/19). The PIVOTAL programmes are aimed at positively changing and decreasing the unemployment rates, historical disadvantages that have continuously impacted Previously Disadvantaged Individuals (PDIs) and the skills gaps faced throughout the Wholesale and Retail Sector.

W&RSETA aimed to achieve this by directly addressing key challenges through the PIVOTAL programmes project. The key challenges include skills shortages, lack of funding, lack of employees with industry-specific qualifications and skills, and a lack of employees with adequate training, higher or tertiary education relevant to available occupations and occupation gaps in the sector (W&RSETA, 2018/19). The main objective was to utilise SETA funds to ensure the enrolment in and completion of learning programmes that provided full or part qualification 13 650 learners, as a response to the key challenges identified.

The overall objective of the National Skills Development Strategy III (NSDS III) is to “increase access to high quality and relevant education and training and skills development opportunities, including workplace learning and experience, to enable effective participation in the economy and society by all South Africans and reduce inequalities” (DHET, 2011). It focuses on 8 key challenges, which include low skills levels and poor work readiness; lack of basic or entry-level numeracy and literacy skills; lack of progress towards intermediate and higher skills levels; lack of adaptation towards a knowledge-based economy; systematic blockages; lack of strategies and systematic skills development; and the urban bias of economic development.

The NSDS III outlines how the SETAs form part of stakeholders that are key in achieving the goals of the NSDS III and the responsibilities of the SETAs in achieving those goals. The main obligation of the SETAs is to develop Sector Skills Plans (SSPs), through which the SETAs map out the plans for the relative sectors to address labour market demands, skills gaps and occupational shortages, as well as to map out solutions for these challenges based on the circumstances of each sector. The NSDS III is focused on ensuring an enhanced performance for SETAs that allows SETA boards to direct more effort towards strategy and sector skills development through a focus on the capacity and directive of SETAs; improved planning and financial management; training that leads to full qualifications; managing per capita costs and investments in training; and the development of shared services (DHET, 2011).

3.2 Transformation in W&RSETA

The Sector Skills Plan (SSP) has two vital sections for evaluation – Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Sector Priority Actions – that provide an analysis of performance, looking particularly at goals and skills priorities that weren’t met, and providing a realistic view of how it is that goals were not achieved and what can be achieved in future. The M&E section provides a reflection on the process and outcome of the SSP, details M&E at W&RSETA, details how M&E data can be used to enhance SETA performance and provides an action plan for addressing unachieved targets. Additionally, data provided in the enrolment and completion spreadsheets and project register spreadsheets can be used in conjunction to M&E data to create an analysis of the programmes that will inform the overall performance of the SETA in skills development. The Skills Priority Actions looks at the findings of the SSP, particularly at the skills priorities, and also looks at what actions can be set in place to support the SSP. Both sections highlight transformation as a priority for the sector, which is inclusive of employing the youth, providing career guidance and development opportunities, developing rural youth and providing training and employment for people living with disabilities.

These sections of the SSP look at how W&RSETA can keep track of its return on investment (ROI) and impact, as well as sustainably respond to transformation and development as prescribed by the NSDP and national targets. The Sector Priority Actions section highlights that South Africa's youth unemployment is high and that results also show poor performance from the youth due to a lack of basic skills and high turnover, this raises the importance of skills and occupation gaps and shortages and, thus, the importance of PIVOTAL programmes (W&RSETA, 2019).

The evaluation of the role of W&RSETA in transformation provides an account of the SETA's performance between 2005 and 2015, highlights the successes and provides recommendation for the further achieving transformation in the W&R sector. The evaluation shows that while the gender employment ratio is 51% of males to 49% of women, there is a "skewed distribution of ethnicity and skill levels in favour of white males, with other ethnicities and women being severely under-represented" (WRLC & CPUT, 2016). While the evaluation is of the period before Redflank's Impact Assessment, similar to sources from 2016 to 2020, it identifies the importance for continued and sustainable transformation in the W&R sector.

A key tool for transformation that W&RSETA and other SETAs have used for transformation are internships. The paper by Siphokazi Koyana and Roger B Mason explores transformation through the role of internships in the W&R sector in South Africa. The paper outlines the benefits of internships to both the students and employers, characterises good internships, as well as mandatory and optional internships. This information is relevant for establishing whether internships provide as much of a valuable experience and impact as is perceived throughout the W&R sector and in informing what can be done to improve the intervention. However, it states that there is a lack of published research on internships in South Africa and none specifically on internships in the W&R sector (Koyana & Mason, 2018). This highlights a need for further study on internships, learnerships and similar programmes' role in the W&R sector

An article titled 'Employment opportunities for women and people with disabilities' looks at different interventions by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to ensure the availability of quality employment opportunities for women, youth and people living with disabilities, as well as measures for encouraging inclusive workplaces. Multiple programmes have been initiated by DTI which include "techno-girl" programme in partnership with the Ministry of Women, South African Women Entrepreneur's Network (SAWEN) strategy, Cooperative Incentive Scheme (CIS), Technology for Women in Business (TWIB), for example (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2012). The different interventions can provide an array of lessons that can be considered in providing recommendations for the W&RSETA, as well as lessons and successes that can be borrowed when planning for future PIVOTAL programmes.

3.3 Youth in W&RSETA's PIVOTAL Programmes

The Centre for Development and Enterprise conducted research on practical ways to reduce youth unemployment. This research is focused on providing ideas for addressing youth unemployment have been selected based in their potential to stimulate debate in a policy area that is sorely in need of new ideas and fresh approaches (CDE & Business Leadership in South Africa, 2018). The paper proposes a few initiatives that can be tested in South Africa, which provides relevant stakeholders such as SETAs and other public and private enterprises options to add when considering skills development programmes and while these ideas might not be full proof, it gives an opportunity to fine tune the ideas based on the circumstances and an opportunity to expand the scope of possibilities for the youth.

Furthermore, the paper suggests that existing proposed interventions targeted at reducing youth unemployment are directed at the symptoms rather than the cause of youth unemployment (CDE & Business Leadership in South Africa, 2018). The analysis provided can further inform the interventions that the W&RSETA is working towards implementing in future.

The Independent Evaluation Group released an evaluation of World Bank and IFC Support focused on youth employment programmes. It evaluates the interventions towards youth employment by the World Bank and IFC, the effectiveness of the support and also gives recommendations for youth employment programmes. Although these youth employment programmes are on a global platform, much information and lessons can be drawn from the implementation which can be used to inform SETAs and enterprises in different sectors on how to improve and what to consider when approaching transformation through similar platforms that address youth unemployment. One of the recommendations given is to improve the quality of training provided by formal TVETs, which is highly applicable in South Africa and in the W&RSETA, as it is mentioned in the SSP that TVETs need to align the curriculum to the skills and occupation gaps in the sector (International Evaluation Group, 2013).

3.4 People Living with Disabilities in W&RSETA's PIVOTAL Programmes

The White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides the strategic approach and pillars for realising the rights of people living with disabilities, which is key for ensuring transformation that is in favour of people living with disabilities and other marginalised groups in South Africa. As a policy, it dictates what is permissible and encouraged in creating inclusive spaces that provide equal advantages and opportunities for people living with disabilities, as it does for others. It highlights 9 aspects that are key for ensuring transformation in this area, which also address the right to access to decent work and employment opportunities, and the recognition of people living with disabilities as owners of the economy (Department of Social Development, 2016). The planning, implementation and performance of the W&RSETA in transformation, particularly for people living with disabilities, should be measured against these key pillars and the prescription of the policy.

The W&RSETA Disability Policy aims to ensure an appropriate approach and enabling environment for people living with disabilities that are either W&RSETA employees or are seeking employment with W&RSETA (W&RSETA, 2016). The efforts of W&RSETA in introducing interventions, such as PIVOTAL programmes for the realisation of transformation, as well as the work environment of the SETA are obligated to oblige to the W&RSETA, as it is informed by the White Paper on People with Disabilities and other relevant policies and legislature. As with the White Paper, the paper highlights both the rights and responsibilities of people living with disabilities, as both are key for ensuring a system of checks and balances and ensuring that the set targets adequately address the needs and gaps identified.

The publication titled the 'Making the future of work inclusive of people with disabilities' explores the topic of inclusivity for people living with disabilities in the workplace. Similar to the White Paper, the 'Making the future of work inclusive of people with disabilities' publication explores a rights-based approach to inclusivity in the workplace. It shows that there are 28% more people without disabilities in the labour market and that people with disabilities are at a risk of 8,5% higher of poverty and social exclusion, all while the workplaces all around the world are working towards transformation (ILO BDN, Fundación ONCE & Disability Hub Europe Technical Secretariat, 2020). It brings in a platform to compare what is going on across the globe against what South Africa, particularly the W&R sector planned for transformation, to better inform how realistic and obtainable the targets are.

The function of the Approved Skills Development Grants Policy is to ensure that the financial resources set towards skills development grants, for initiatives such as PIVOTAL programmes, are used appropriately and transparently towards the targets, as prescribed by Section 2 of the Skills Development Act and the criteria put in place in the SETA Grant Regulation of 2012 (W&RSETA, 2019). The policy looks at the management and disbursement of grants, the apportioning of skills levies received, the disbursement of mandatory and discretionary grants and provides a costing model that is aligned to the APP targets of the W&RSETA (W&RSETA, 2019).

This policy will be helpful in ensuring that the targets set for skills development programmes are implemented through the careful use, aligning as far as possible to what has been allocated to each activity or intervention. The conditions outlined in the policy are also key in creating budgets and developing processes and workflows in grants management and disbursement. It will also require M&E, as in the SSP and other relevant documents, to track whether the prescriptions of the policy have been observed in relation to grants to ensure that minority groups, such as people living with disabilities, are able to experience the outcomes and impacts of skills development programmes.

3.5 Women in W&RSETA's PIVOTAL Programmes

The article titled 'Employee Gender Characteristics Among Retail Sectors' looks at how different sectors within wholesale and retail are characterised by varying gender characteristics. The analysis provided in this article is then used to give an overview of how the W&R sector perpetuates gender disparities within itself because of an unintentional continuation of gender roles. It focuses mainly on the concept of stereotypes in retail as one of the main reasons for gender imbalances and disparities. For example, hardware stores are likely to have more male employees than a beauty store and while the number of employees might balance out, improvements can be made towards transformation through updates hiring decisions and business strategies (Chang & Travaglione, 2011). The W&RSETA can use the analysis as an integrated part of recommendations that will allow the SETA to break down disparities within the structures and processes of the sector. Similarly, an article on 'Are There More Female Managers in the Retail Sector? Evidence from Survey Data in Developing Countries' suggests that some sectors are more favourable towards men or women than others, depending on the sub-sector within the W&R sector (Amin & Islam, 2014).

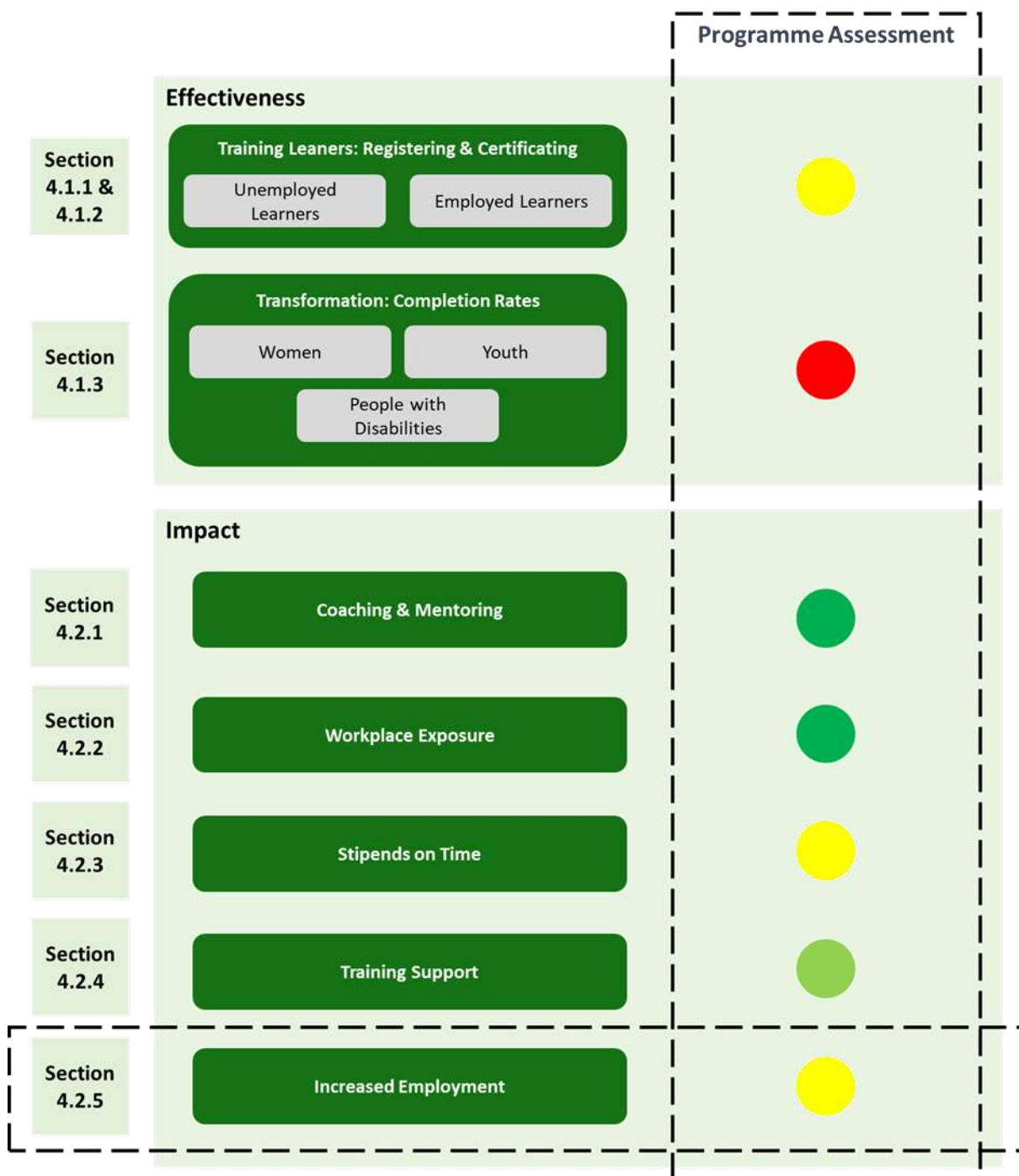
The ILO's working paper on 'Gender in employment policies and programmes: What works for women?' focuses on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are related to the employment, income and provision of decent work opportunities for women (International Labour Force, 2017). The SDGs are set to address socio-economic challenges such as poverty, unemployment, inequality and climate change. The paper looks at experiences across the globe in tackling these socio-economic challenges through working to obtain the SDGs and through an alignment of SDGs and national goals, particularly towards the inclusion of women in the workplace. Through an assessment of policies and social challenges that women face, the paper provides criticism and recommendations on addressing and breaking down systems that perpetuate exclusion. Part 4 of the paper maps out the way forward, which can be implemented and considered in the development of projects and programmes addressing gender inequality.

4 Research Findings

This section presents the findings of the evaluation in the form of impact and effectiveness assessments. The assessments were conducted using key observations made from the analysis of the databases and consultations with stakeholders.

Overall findings are summarised in the dashboard below. Training was partially effective, whilst transformation was not effective. The overall impact of increasing employment was partially met, with contributing factors being the partially met rating of training, exemplary coaching and mentoring and workplace exposure, partially met stipend payment process and met training support provided.

Figure 4-1: Overall Performance Dashboard



4.1 Effectiveness



Definition: Effectiveness

A measure of the extent to which [a project] attains its objectives.

Source: OECD, 2018

As defined above, effectiveness is measured by the degree to which a process or activity is successful in producing the desired result.

Section 4.2 identifies four key results that PIVOTAL Programmes should achieve. These relate to coaching and mentoring, workplace exposure, stipends, and training support, resulting in the overall impact of increased employment. However, before these results can emanate, activities relating to training learners must be conducted. This section reviews the results of the registration and certification of learners to assess the effectiveness of W&RSETA in facilitating training, as a prerequisite to achieving the impact of W&RSETA creating employment.

4.1.1 Registering and Certifying Unemployed Learners

Table 4-1 below shows the extent of achievement of the training in relation to registering and certifying unemployed learners in PIVOTAL Programmes. Eight activities were assessed, with most (6) being either partially met (50-99% of the targets achieved) or not met (less than 50% of targets achieved). The only two activities that were met, at the least, are registering unemployed learners on NQF L2-L5 learnerships and registering unemployed learners on learnerships and apprenticeships addressing scarce skills artisans' occupations, the latter having been achieved exemplarily.

Table 4-1: Effectiveness: Registering and Certifying Unemployed Learners

Objective: Register and Certify Unemployed Learners in PIVOTAL Programmes				
Activity	Annual Target	Achievement	Rating	
1	Register unemployed learners on NQF L2 - L5 learnerships	2100	2479	Met
2	Register unemployed learners on NQF L1 AET learnerships	500	293	Partially Met
3	Register unemployed learners on NQF L2 - L5 qualifications addressing W&R scarce skills occupations	500	123	Not Met
4	Register unemployed learners on learnerships and apprenticeships that address W&R scarce skills artisans' occupations as identified in the W&R SETA SSP	300	360	Exemplary
5	Certify unemployed learners on NQF L2 - L5 learnerships	1200	709	Partially Met
6	Certify unemployed learners on NQF L1 AET learnerships	200	9	Not Met
7	Certify unemployed learners on NQF L2 - L5 qualifications addressing W&R scarce skills occupations	400	354	Partially Met
8	Certify unemployed learners on learnerships and apprenticeships that address W&R scarce skills artisans' occupations as identified in the W&R SETA SSP	180	33	Not Met
Overall Effectiveness		Partially Met		

Source: Annual Report, 2017/18

In general, registration of learners fared better than certification as no targets were met with regard to learners being certified. This suggests that not enough learners complete their programmes, as is further substantiated in Table 4-3 assessing the demographics of achievement.

Unemployed learners that registered in NQF 2-5 learnerships showed better results in comparison to those who registered for NQF 1 AET learnerships. This could be attributed to perceptions regarding the value of lower NQF level programmes, especially in relation to career progression. Furthermore, that AET (Adult Education and Training) programmes, pegged at NQF 1, did not achieve their targets, suggests that (unemployed) adults with limited education do not fare well and need more support.

Overall, with regard to registering and certificating unemployed learners in PIVOTAL programmes, W&RSETA achieved 81% of its targets, with an average achievement of 61.46%. This means PIVOTAL programmes are partially effective in training unemployed learners and there is room for improvement.

4.1.2 Registering and Certificating Employed Learners

Table 4-2 below shows the extent of achievement of the training related to registering and certificating employed learners in PIVOTAL Programmes. 10 activities were assessed, the majority of which (8) were either partially met or not met. Two activities were met. Mirroring the training of unemployed learners, registering unemployed learners on NQF L2-L5 learnerships was met. Signifying the only met achievement in certificating learners (unemployed and employed), certificating employed learners via recognition of prior learning (RPL) was met.

Table 4-2: Effectiveness: Registering and Certificating Employed Learners

Objective: Register and Certificate Employed Learners in PIVOTAL Programmes				
	Activity	Annual Target	Achievement	Rating
1	Register employed learners on NQF L2 - L5 learnerships	2000	2191	Met
2	Register employed learners on NQF L1 AET learnerships	500	293	Partially Met
3	Register employed learners on NQF L2 - L5 qualifications addressing W&R scarce skills occupations	1000	657	Partially Met
4	Register employed learners via Recognition of Prior Learning	300	68	Not Met
5	Register employed learners on qualifications that address critical skills as identified in the W&RSETA SSP	1000	20	Not Met
6	Certificate employed learners on NQF L2 - L5 learnerships	1200	569	Not Met
7	Certificate employed learners on NQF L1 AET learnerships	200	9	Not Met
8	Certificate employed learners on NQF L2 - L5 qualifications addressing W&R scarce skills occupations	800	613	Partially Met
9	Certificate employed learners via Recognition of Prior Learning	250	292	Met
10	Certificate employed learners on qualifications that address critical skills as identified in the W&RSETA SSP	500	331	Partially Met
Overall Effectiveness		Partially Met		

Source: Annual Report, 2017/18

Unlike with unemployed learners, registration of learners generally fared largely the same as certification. NQF L2 - L5 qualifications addressing W&R scarce skills occupations performed best. Whilst NQF L1 AET learnerships for the employed achieved at least 50% of their target, the target for certificating was not met. This means, similar to unemployed learners, employed learners on AET

programmes struggle to complete their courses. This suggests that work experience is not a differentiating factor in encouraging adults with limited education to complete their programmes and further their education.

Despite not registering enough learners in 2017/18, RPL exceeded its certification target. This discrepancy suggests the learners that were certificated in 2017/18 were a cohort that registered in a previous year. There is still a high number of employed learners who do not complete their programmes, particularly in L2-L5 learnerships and L1 AET learnerships.

Overall, with regard to registering and certificating employed learners in PIVOTAL programmes, W&RSETA achieved 65% of its targets, with an average achievement of 57%. This means PIVOTAL programmes are partially effective in training employed learners and there is room for improvement.

4.1.3 Transformation Objectives: Completion Rates

A key focus for this study relates to how well PIVOTAL programmes have met transformational objectives. The learner databases were analysed with this objective in mind. The findings indicate that the W&RSETA needs to improve conditions for learners in order to increase the completion of courses.

Less than half of the women that entered PIVOTAL programmes completed them. With regard to learnerships, 4177 women had entered and only 1653 completed them which translates to a 39,5% completion rate. Similarly, 1163 women entered skills programmes and only 400 completed (34,3%) .

There were few people with disabilities that had entered PIVOTAL programmes. Only 170 people with disabilities entered learnerships in 2017/18 and 92 completed the programmes. This translates to a 54,1% completion rate, which is better than the one for women in learnerships. Moreover, 7 people with disabilities entered skills programmes and one 1 completed, giving it a completion rate of 14%.

Youth that entered PIVOTAL programmes fared better than people with disabilities. 3190 youth entered learnerships and 1374 completed their programmes. Although there were more entrants in this category than people with disabilities, the completion rate is lower than both at 43%. Similarly, 681 youth entered skills programmes and only 223 completed their programmes in 2017/18. This gives it a rating of 32,7%.

The table below provides a summary of the completion rates.

Table 4-3: Completion Rates

		Enrolled	Completed	Completion Rates
People with Disabilities	Learnerships	170	92	54.1%
	Skills Development	7	1	14%
Women	Learnerships	4 177	1 653	39.5%
	Skills Development	1 163	400	34.3%
Youth	Learnerships	3 190	1 374	43%
	Skills Development	681	223	32.7%

4.2 Impact



Definition: Impact

The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators.

Source: OECD, 2018

The broader impact that has occurred as a result of the implementation of PIVOTAL Programmes towards the implementation of transformational imperatives was evaluated based on an assessment of delivery of five impacts, with the fifth impact (increasing employment) being the overarching goal.

To measure impact the following were assessed:

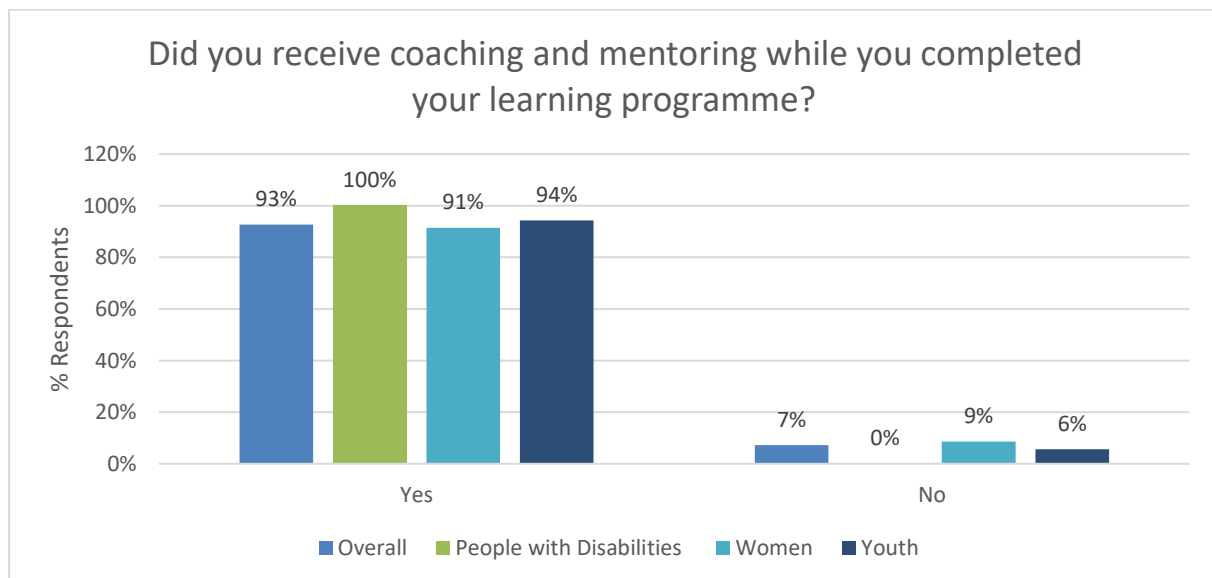
- Extent to which the programmes provided coaching and mentoring, workplace exposure, stipends and training support, and increased employment. These were assessed across different previously disadvantaged groups.

Following on the effectiveness assessment in the previous section, this section ultimately assesses whether the training objectives-and interventions thereof-articulated in the effectiveness assessment resulted in the overall impact of increased employment.

4.2.1 Providing Coaching and Mentoring

The graph below shows the number of learners that indicated that they received coaching and mentoring in the duration of their learning programmes.

Figure 4-2: Coaching and Mentoring Achievement



Source: Learner Survey, 2021

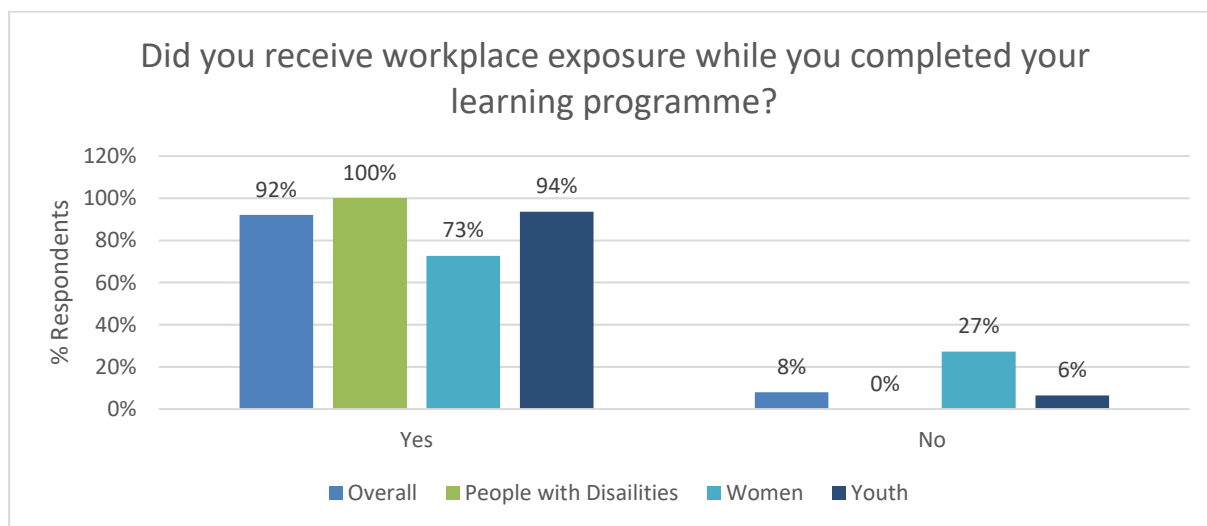
The graph above indicates that a large majority of learners received coaching and mentoring while they were completing their learning programmes, with an overall percentage of 93% and 100% of people with disabilities having received coaching and mentoring. It is particularly beneficial that the proportion of those that received coaching and mentoring is high due their relevance in education and in career advancement. Coaching and mentoring is an integral part of knowledge transfer and knowledge sharing, as well as for developing one’s communication skills. It also allows the learners to

draw knowledge that they would not have gained from their studies. Mentoring and coaching is beneficial for inculcating both soft and hard skills required by the sector, which helps learners develop confidence and assurance in their abilities to do the work. Coaching and mentoring are most beneficial when the coaches and/ or mentors have experience in the field that the learner either works in or shows interest in, in terms of their career plans. Although the highest number of students that did not receive coaching and mentoring is only 9%, attempting to bridge this gap might better assist learners in improving their performance in the learning programmes.

4.2.2 Providing Workplace Exposure

The graph below shows the number of learners that have and have not been exposed to the workplace during their learning programmes.

Figure 4-3: Workplace Exposure Achievement



Source: Learner Survey, 2021

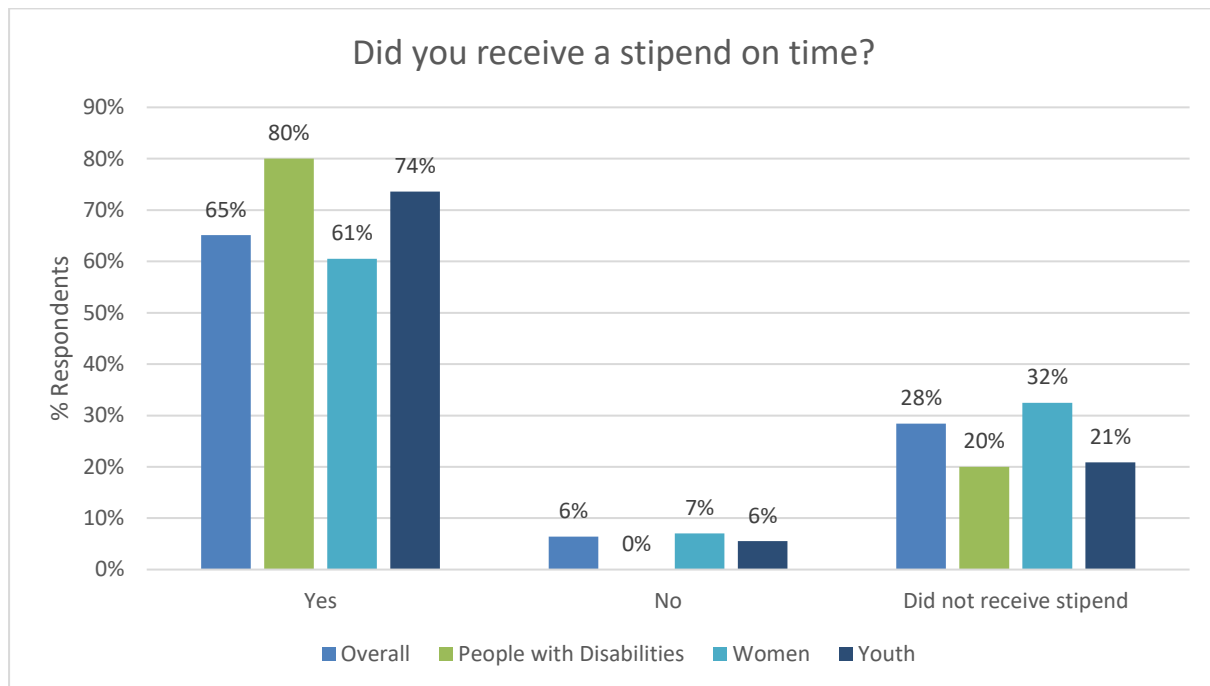
Workplace exposure often forms part of learners’ studies, such as when it is added as a requirement in order for a student to receive their qualification or certification. Workplace exposure is also important because it allows learners to acquire practical skills required in the field, thus increasing the number of work entrants and existing employees with the skills needed to fulfil job responsibilities.

The graph above indicates that an overall of 92% of learners received workplace exposure. As with stipends and coaching and mentoring, people with disabilities had the highest number of learners that received workplace exposure (100% of respondents). They were followed by the youth, with 94% of learners having received workplace exposure.

4.2.3 Providing Stipends on Time

The graph below illustrates the number of learners received their stipends *on time* in the duration of the PIVOTAL programmes.

Figure 4-4: Stipend Achievement



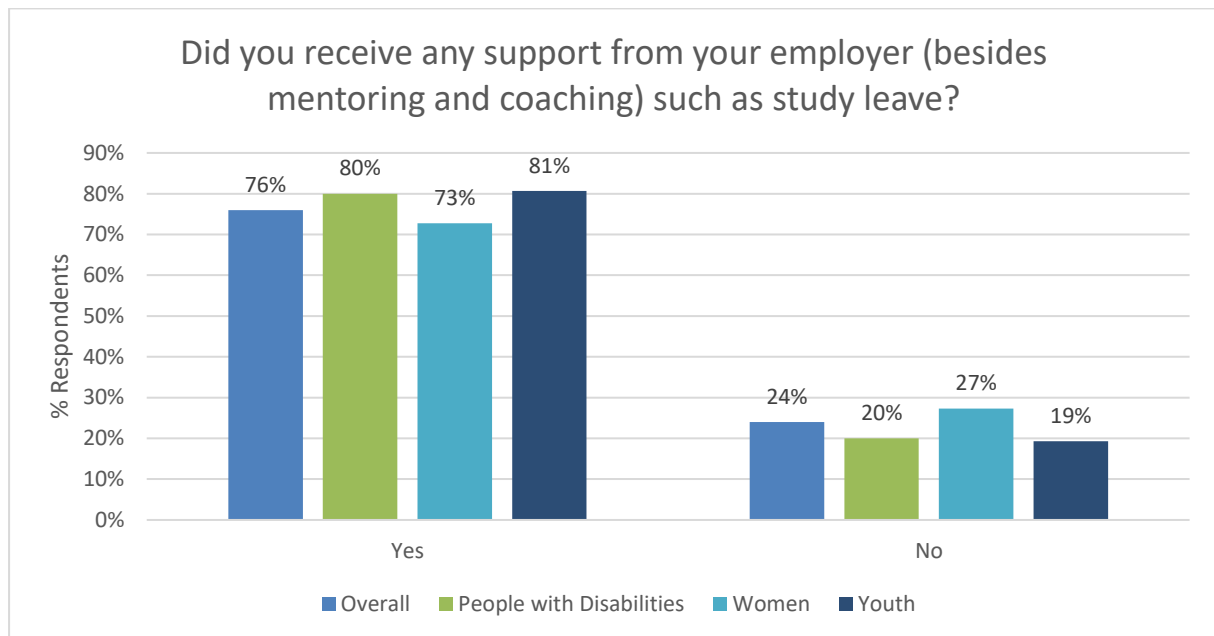
Source: Learner Survey, 2021

The graph above shows that 65% of learners received their stipends on time. This figure is more than twice that of those who did not receive stipends at all (28%) and nearly eleven times that of those who received late stipends (6%). People with disabilities and the youth show the highest proportions of learners that received stipends on time with 80% and 74%, respectively. Nearly a third of learners (28%), overall, did not receive a stipend at all. Not providing learners with stipends can have counteractive results on the transformation goals that W&RSETA has set in place. The challenge is that some unemployed learners, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, might not be able to afford the expenses that come with being part of the programmes, such as transport to classes and work, or may not be able to (or incentivised) to abandon other activities that may provide them with minimal income to join PIVOTAL programmes instead. Thus, poorer learners may be at a bigger disadvantage than those that can afford these expenses.

4.2.4 Providing Training Support

The graph below shows the figures for learners that received support, such as study leave, from their employers.

Figure 4-5: Other Training Support Achievement



Source: Learner Survey, 2021

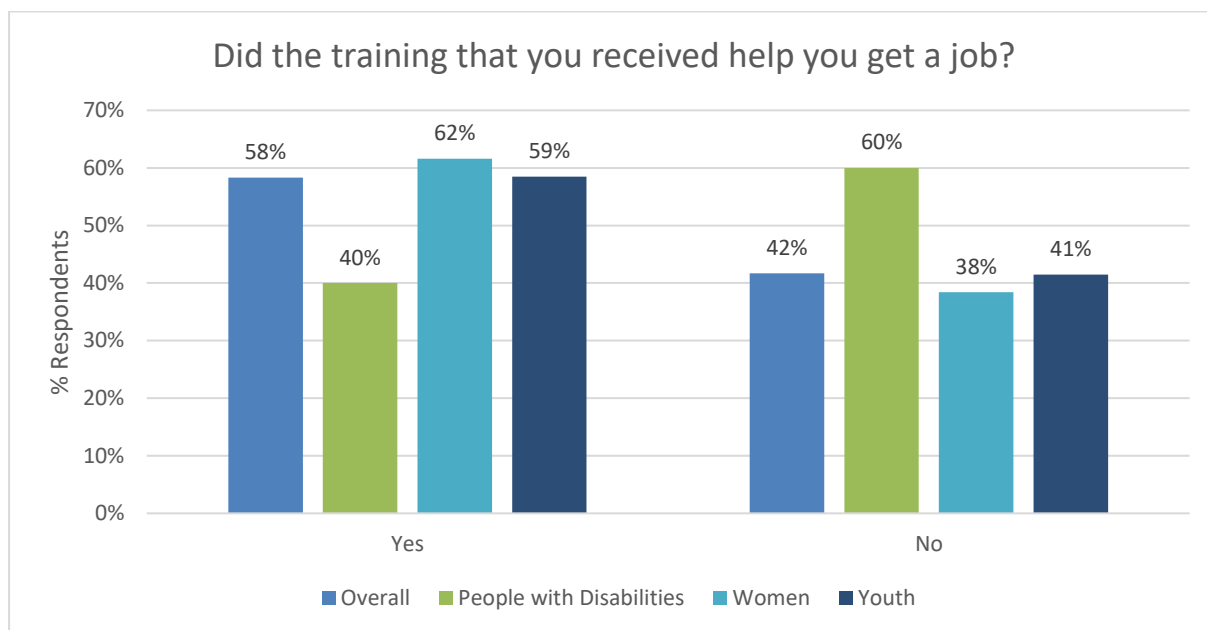
The graph above shows that 81% of the youth surveyed received additional support from their employers, followed by 80% of people with disabilities. At 73%, the number of women who received support from their employers is less compared to the other groups and overall number of learners. The graph also shows that nearly a quarter of learners (24%) did not receive any support to assist them through their learning programmes.

Support such as study leave can be a key factor which contributes to how learners experience their learning programmes and can affect the ease of completing a programme. For example, learners that receive study leave might perform better than those who do not because they have more time to engage with their content. The number of women who received support from their employers may present a socio-economic problem due to the roles that women play in society. Women may bear a disproportionate brunt of taking care of families and households, leaving them with little time to focus on their learning-in addition to attending to work.

4.2.5 Increasing Employment

The graph below shows whether learners found that the training they received was helpful in them finding a job.

Figure 4-6: Employment Achievement



Source: Learner Survey, 2021

In comparison to the other graphs above, the figures in this graph are significantly lower and illustrate learners’ lowered perceptions regarding the value the training they received added to their career progression. This graph shows that, overall, 58% of learners believe that the training received helped them get a job.

The figures above also show a contrast when compared to the previous ones. Despite having received the most support, only 40% of people with disabilities believe that the training and support they received helped them get jobs. This may be attributed to an overall lack of inclusivity in the sector, particularly at the recruitment stage, as well as limited capabilities or capacity to accommodate people with disabilities. Furthermore, more women than any other group (62%) indicated that they believe that the training helped them get jobs, despite them indicating the least amount of support received across the groups.

Overall, 42% of learners indicated that the training received did not help them get jobs. This is a concerning proportion of learners and may indicate that despite the provision of learning programmes and support, there could still be a misalignment in the skills/ occupations needed within the sector and the skills/ occupations provided through the learning programmes.

5 Key Findings and Recommendations

The table below presents a summary of the key findings and recommendations that have presented themselves during this Study.

Table 5-1: Key Findings and Recommendations

Focus Area	Key Finding	Recommendation
1 Improving poor target achievement across programmes by better facilitating and managing learning programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both objectives of registering and certifying unemployed and employed learners were partially met, limited by a poor showing in certifications, particularly in L1 qualifications and artisan qualifications NQF L2-L5 programmes were more effective and show better performance than NQF L1 AET Learnerships Completion across programmes is poor. However, NQF L2 - L5 qualifications addressing W&R scarce skills occupations and NQF 2-5 learnerships for unemployed learners showed better results. The similar performance of programmes across unemployed and employed learners suggests that work experience is not a differentiating factor in effective training activities, completing training or securing/improving employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many targets were not achieved due to delays in the process. The SETA should embark on an exercise to map out and improve its business processes and architecture, with a view to automate, remove duplications and fill gaps to improve efficiency More awareness and support needs to be provided to those on NQF L1 qualifications, particularly adults in AET. The dissemination of information on what can be achieved with lower-level qualifications may encourage learners to acquire more experience or higher-level qualifications to further their progress in the sector The supply of learners across different NQF qualifications levels (e.g., L1 and L2 vs. L3+) and programmes (e.g., learnerships vs. skills programmes) should be assessed based not only on demand but future projections with change drivers in mind. More intense, higher level qualifications may prove more advantageous for learners in an ultra-competitive and changing labour market The SETA should bolster partnerships with employers, training providers and other stakeholders to increase their capacity to train and absorb learners
2 Promoting transformation and employment by improving completion rates of previously disadvantaged groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to completion rates being low across programmes, they are also low across various previously disadvantaged groups At 54.1%, the highest completion rates are those for people with disabilities on learnerships The average completion rate for people with disabilities, women and youth in 2017/18 in learnerships and skills development was 36% This means that whilst previously disadvantaged individuals are afforded opportunities to enter training, they do not enter the labour market in as many numbers, decreasing the potential for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase (on-time) completion rates of people with disabilities, youth and women through effective and relevant training and necessary support such as coaching and mentoring, workplace exposure, paying stipends (and paying them on time), and providing other types of support such as study leave and psychosocial support To ensure learning programmes offer learners the best chance at completion and employment, the following are suggested as appropriate target cohorts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learnerships should predominantly be targeted towards unemployed learners.

Focus Area	Key Finding	Recommendation
	<p>transformation in the workplace and limiting an increase in employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internships should predominantly be targeted towards unemployed university graduates. ○ Apprenticeships should be maintained as a focus on trades ○ Skills programmes should predominantly be targeted towards employed learners. By its nature a skills programme is short in duration and limited on content, therefore it is more appropriate for people who already have some knowledge and skills and do not need a lengthier, more in-depth programme. This may also assist in redirecting unskilled learners away from programmes viewed as limited for the extent of training they require ○ Short programmes, particularly targeted at employed learners, may be useful in providing refresher courses and topping up skills in a prompt, responsive manner. However, as a short programme is not exhaustive (it may, in fact, be specialist), they need to be paired with some skills base gained either through prior work experience or introduced in programmes such as learnerships, internships, apprenticeships and skills programmes
<p>3 Creating employment as an impact through sufficient skilling and support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People with disabilities received the most support in terms of coaching and mentoring, workplace exposure and receiving stipends on time. They also followed on closely from the youth in terms of receiving other types of support such as study leave. ● Despite this support, people with disabilities fared the worst in securing employment. Only 40% of people with disabilities believe that the training and support they received helped them get jobs. ● Overall, only 58% of all previously disadvantaged learners believe that the training received helped them get a job ● The mismatch between training and employment outcomes suggests that the sector is not able to absorb enough learners. This may be because learners are qualified in oversaturated fields, employers do not have confidence in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support people with disabilities to enter employment by incentivising employers to support them. In addition, employers should be trained on how best to accommodate people with disabilities in the workplace ● In conjunction with QCTO, accelerate the consultative processes for updating or developing courses to keep up to date with industry demand and change drivers such as 4IR and COVID-19, thus making learners more competitive sooner ● Introduce and/or emphasise unit standards on soft skills and business management skills for all courses. This is expected to improve learners' employability and entrepreneurship skills. ● On the premise of providing business management training and learners utilising the entrepreneurship skills gained, encourage entrepreneurship as an alternative to employment

Focus Area	Key Finding	Recommendation
	the training they received or economic conditions (such as the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, which greatly affected the W&R sector) do not allow for mass absorption of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner with (larger) employers, incubators and other stakeholders to incubate and mentor emerging small businesses• Whilst programmes are relooked at to include more emphasis on soft skills and business management skills, short programmes can fill this void.

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